

Governor Bev Perdue Inaugural Speech

Welcome.

Welcome to all of you.

It is a privilege to be here today

With gratitude we salute my predecessor, Governor Mike Easley, for his years of service.

I want to thank so many of you. Especially my husband Bob Eaves-- North Carolina's first "First Gentleman." And, my two sons Emmett and Garrett who have been a part of this journey from my very first day of public life.

To all the family, friends, colleagues who have gathered for this celebration. I say-- there is simply nothing finer than to be in North Carolina.

Today a new administration begins, one that is different from any other. My presence before you represents a departure from our past.

It is a new beginning.

Today, I pledge that this new beginning is much more than symbolic. I accept this oath of office to serve as North Carolina's 73rd governor with complete resolve to meet the challenges before us-- directly and forcefully.

With a profound sense of duty, I intend to do everything in my power to provide opportunity to all who live here from Murphy to Manteo.

North Carolina has sometimes been slow to answer history's call. For too long, too many were held back by poverty, discrimination, and the lack of an education. Our ability to confront these challenges is what has enabled us to move ahead.

More than two hundred years ago, North Carolina widened the doors of opportunity by establishing the nation's first state supported university-- the University of North Carolina.

Big thinkers staked North Carolina's claim as a leader in learning and discovery at the Research Triangle Park, the largest research park in the world.

Prosperity is coming back to the old textile town of Kannapolis with the creation of a world-class, bio-tech center that will provide thousands of jobs to our people.

Our history books tell story after story of bold acts of leadership that brought hope and progress to our people.

Now it is time for us in the old North state to confront new challenges. We are in the midst of a global economic crisis. People are worried about losing their jobs, paying their mortgage, and planning for their future.

Now is not the time for us to hunker down. We cannot "just" cut back. And, we will not lower expectations.

I feel the urgency and I know you do, too. What we will do is accept this time of challenge as an opportunity to think big, dig deep, and push ahead. What we do over the next four years will define our future.

You have a governor who will speak candidly and who will act boldly.

I will focus on building on our core strengths and building up new strengths.

That's what we do in North Carolina. No other state can claim to have turned the practice of hauling moonshine into the high-tech, fast-growth engine, known as-- NASCAR.

It took grit and toughness to establish prosperous industries in agriculture and manufacturing. With innovation we will